

June 20, 2023

Members of the Long Lake City Council,

The cities of Orono and Long Lake have asked their citizens to step up to become fully trained and certified fire service professionals and build a fire department that serves the needs of the collective community. That's exactly what the past and present members of the Long Lake Fire Department (LLFD) have done. We have selflessly dedicated years of our lives to forming a highly trained, successfully functioning, and well respected fire department that is set up to serve the needs of our larger community today and to grow along with the needs of our community's future.

As the two cities have grappled over their future fire protection, the members of the LLFD have had one and only one request and that is to keep this fire department whole. Remaining whole not only preserves the successful department that you asked us to build for this community but also we, as knowledgeable fire industry professionals, understand that fire related emergency response needs are best served when resources and efforts are combined to service a common area. In other words, when cities work together the citizens receive better, faster and more cost-effective services. This is well-known and accepted as an industry best practice. Because of the recently accepted plans by the City of Orono to prematurely annex Station 2 and its call area, which goes directly against our request, we feel that it is important to repeat our strongly encouraged recommendation to both cities to keep this department whole. It simply does not benefit our community to dismantle this operationally successful fire department and in turn create two superfluous departments with uncertain futures.

Members of the LLFD are citizens of our collective community who serve our collective community and want the opportunity to continue to do so as one department for decades to come.

As a demonstration of your stated support of the dedicated and proud Firefighters who serve your community, we ask you do everything in your power to find a mutually beneficial path forward for shared fire services.

Respectfully,

The LLFD